

**A. CASH ASSISTANCE STANDARDS**

**Purpose:** This subcategory contains cash assistance need and payment standards, eligibility standards based on income, and standards for ongoing additional requirements.

**WAC 388-478-0005 Cash assistance need and payment standards and grant maximum.**

- (1) Need standards for cash assistance programs represent the amount of income required by individuals and families to maintain a minimum and adequate standard of living. Need standards are based on assistance unit size and include basic requirements for food, clothing, shelter, energy costs, transportation, household maintenance and operations, personal maintenance, and necessary incidentals.
- (2) Payment standards for assistance units in medical institutions and other facilities are based on the need for clothing, personal maintenance, and necessary incidentals (see WAC 388-478-0040 and 388-478-0045).
- (3) Need and payment standards for persons and families who do not reside in medical institutions and other facilities are based on their obligation to pay for shelter.
  - (a) Eligibility and benefit levels for persons and families who meet the requirements in WAC 388-478-0010 are determined using standards for assistance units with an obligation to pay shelter costs.
  - (b) Eligibility and benefit levels for all other persons and families are determined using standards for assistance units who have shelter provided at no cost.
  - (c) For recent arrivals to Washington state who apply for temporary assistance for needy families (TANF), see WAC 388-478-0025.
- (4) The monthly grant for an assistance unit containing eight or more persons cannot exceed the grant maximum of one thousand seventy-five dollars.

**CLARIFYING INFORMATION**

DSHS is required by state law [RCW 74.04.770] to establish, on an annual basis, standards of need for cash assistance programs. These standards are based on studies of actual living costs for basic requirements. They may vary by program and family size. Separate standards may be established for assistance units with shelter provided at no cost.

Payment standards are based on assistance unit size and are used to determine eligibility and benefit levels for cash assistance.

The percentage difference between the need and payment standard for an assistance unit is called the ratable reduction. For assistance units of eight or more, the grant payment cannot exceed a maximum of \$1,075.

**WAC 388-478-0010 Households with obligations to pay shelter costs.**

The monthly need and payment standards for cash assistance are based on a determination of assistance unit size and whether the assistance unit has an obligation to pay shelter costs.

Eligibility and benefit level is determined using standards for assistance unit with obligations to pay shelter costs. An assistance unit has an obligation to pay shelter costs if one of the members:

- (1) Owns, purchases or rents their place of residence, even if costs are limited to property taxes, fire insurance, sewer, water, or garbage;
- (2) Resides in a lower income housing project which is funded under the United States Housing Act of 1937 or Section 236 of the National Housing Act, if the household either pays rent or makes a utility payment instead of a rental payment; or
- (3) Is homeless. Homeless households include persons or families who:
  - (a) Lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; or
  - (b) Reside in a public or privately operated shelter designed to provide

temporary living accommodations; or

- (c) Live in temporary lodging provided through a public or privately funded emergency shelter program.

### CLARIFYING INFORMATION

In August, 1990, a the Thurston County Superior Court entered an order in *Washington Coalition for the Homeless v. Thompson* which held that standards for assistance units with shelter provided at no cost could not be applied to persons and families who are “without assured free shelter”. The department’s rule defining persons and families whose eligibility and payment levels must be based on standards for assistance units with obligations to pay shelter costs complies with the court order.

**WAC 388-478-0015 Need standards for cash assistance.**

The need standards and one hundred eighty-five percent of the need standards for cash assistance units are:

(1) For assistance units with obligation to pay shelter costs:

Assistance Unit Size	Need Standard	185% of Need	Assistance Unit Size	Need Standard	185% of Need
1	\$ 797	\$1,474	6	\$1,918	\$3,549
2	1,008	1,864	7	2,215	4,098
3	1,247	2,307	8	2,452	4,536
4	1,467	2,714	9	2,693	4,982
5	1,690	3,127	10 or more	2,926	5,413

(2) For assistance units with shelter provided at no cost :

Assistance Unit Size	Need Standard	185% of Need	Assistance Unit Size	Need Standard	185% of Need
1	\$ 480	\$ 888	6	\$1,156	\$2,138
2	607	1,122	7	1,335	2,469
3	752	1,391	8	1,478	2,734
4	884	1,635	9	1,623	3,002
5	1,019	1,885	10 or more	1,764	3,263

**WAC 388-478-0020 Payment standards for TANF, SFA, GA-S, GA-H and RCA.**

- (1) The payment standards for temporary assistance for needy families (TANF), state family assistance (SFA), general assistance for pregnant women (GA-S), general assistance for children (GA-H) and refugee cash assistance (RCA) assistance units with obligations to pay shelter costs are:

Assistance Unit Size	Payment Standard	Assistance Unit Size	Payment Standard
1	\$349	6	\$ 841
2	440	7	971
3	546	8	1,075
4	642	9	1,180
5	740	10 or more	1,283

- (2) The payment standards for TANF, SFA, GA-S, GA-H and RCA assistance units with shelter provided at no cost are:

Assistance Unit Size	Payment Standard	Assistance Unit Size	Payment Standard
1	\$212	6	\$511
2	268	7	591
3	332	8	654
4	391	9	718
5	451	10 or more	780

**WAC 388-478-0035 Maximum earned income limits for TANF and SFA.**

To be eligible for temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) or state family assistance (SFA), a family's gross earned income must be below the following levels:

Number of Family Members	Maximum Earned Income Level	Number of Family Members	Maximum Earned Income Level
1	\$ 698	6	\$1,682
2	880	7	1,942
3	1,092	8	2,150
4	1,284	9	2,360
5	1,480	10 or more	2,566

**CLARIFYING INFORMATION**

To determine a family's gross earned income see Income - Maximum Earned Income Levels.

**WAC 388-478-0040 Payment standard for persons in medical institutions.**

- (1) "Medical institutions" include skilled nursing homes, public nursing homes, general hospitals, tuberculosis hospitals, intermediate care facilities, and psychiatric hospitals approved by the joint commission on accreditation of hospitals (JCAH).
- (2) The monthly payment standard for eligible persons in medical institutions is forty-one dollars and sixty-two cents. The payment covers the person's need for clothing, personal maintenance, and necessary incidentals (CPI).

**WAC 388-478-0045 Payment standard for persons in certain group living facilities.**

- (1) A monthly grant payment of thirty-eight dollars and eighty-four cents will be made to eligible persons in the following facilities:
  - (a) Congregate care facilities (CCF);
  - (b) Adult residential rehabilitation centers/adult residential treatment facilities (AARC/ARTF); and
  - (c) Division of developmental disabilities (DDD) group home facilities.
- (2) The payment covers the person's need for clothing, personal maintenance, and necessary incidentals (CPI).

**CLARIFYING INFORMATION**

The payment standard for TANF, SFA, GA-S, GA-H, and RCA recipients who are in medical institutions or other facilities for more than 90 days is the appropriate CPI amount. See **LIVING WITH A RELATIVE**.

Effective September 1, 2000

**WAC 388-478-0050 Payment standards for ongoing additional requirements.**

An “ongoing additional requirement” is a continuing need that you have for which you require additional financial benefits in order to continue living independently. The “payment standard” for ongoing additional requirement benefits is the amount of money needed to pay for these items or services. We use the following payment standards for ongoing additional requirements approved under WAC 388-473-0020 through 388-473-0060:

- (1) Restaurant meals: \$187.09 per month (or \$6.04 per day with the payment rounded down to the nearest dollar amount);
- (2) Laundry: \$11.13 per month;
- (3) Service animal food: \$33.66 per month;
- (4) Home delivered meals: The amount charged by the agency providing the meals;
- (6) Telephone: The local telephone flat rate for the area; or the discounted amount established under the Washington telephone assistance program (WTAP) rate, whichever is less.



Effective January 1, 2001

**WAC 388-478-0055 SSI payment standards for eligible recipients.**

- (1) Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a cash assistance program for needy individuals and couples who meet federal disability guidelines as aged, blind or disabled. Since the SSI program began in January 1974, the state of Washington has added to the federal benefit level with state funds, known as the SSI state supplement. If you are found eligible for SSI, you will receive cash assistance based on the combined federal and state supplement benefit levels, minus countable income. An essential person is someone who lives with you and provides care and personal services that enable you to live in either your own home or the home of the essential person.
- (2) Effective **January 1, 2001**, the federal, state and combined benefit levels for an eligible individual and couple are:

- (a) If you are living alone in area 1: King, Pierce, Snohomish, Thurston, and Kitsap Counties.

LIVING ALONE – In own household or alternate care, except nursing homes or medical institutions	Federal Benefit Level	State Supplement Benefit Level	Combined Federal/State Benefit Level
Individual	\$ 530	\$ 25.90	\$ 555.90
Individual with One Essential Person	\$ 796	\$ 19.90	\$ 815.90
Individual with: Multiple essential persons	\$ 530 for the eligible individual plus \$257 for each essential person (no state supplement)		
Individual with an ineligible spouse	\$ 530	\$ 166.10	\$ 696.10
Couple	\$ 796	\$ 19.90	\$ 815.90
Couple with one or more essential persons	\$ 796 for eligible couple plus \$257 for each essential person (no state supplement)		

- (b) If you are living alone in Area II: All counties.

LIVING ALONE – In own household or alternate care, except nursing homes or medical institutions	Federal Benefit Level	State Supplement Benefit Level	Combined Federal/State Benefit Level
Individual	\$ 530	\$ 5.45	\$ 535.45
Individual with: One essential person	\$ 796	\$0	\$ 796
Individual with: Multiple essential persons	\$ 530 for the eligible individual plus \$257 for each essential person (no state supplement)		
Individual with an ineligible spouse	\$ 530	\$ 136.15	\$ 666.15
Couple	\$ 796	\$0	\$ 796
Couple with one or more essential persons	\$ 796 for eligible couple plus \$257 for each essential person (no state supplement)		

(c) If you are in shared living in either Area 1 or 2.			
SHARED LIVING – IN THE HOME OF ANOTHER PERSON	Federal Benefit Level	State Supplement Benefit Level	Combined Benefit Level
Individual	\$ 353.34	\$ 3.71	\$ 357.05
Individual with: One essential person	\$ 530	\$ 4.20	\$ 534.20
Individual with: Multiple essential persons	\$ 353.34 for the eligible individual plus \$ 170.66 for each essential person (no state supplement)		
Individual with an ineligible spouse	\$ 353.24	\$ 101.66	\$ 455
Couple	\$ 530.67	\$ 4.20	\$ 534.87
Couple with one or more essential persons	\$ 530.67 for eligible couple plus \$ 170.66 for each essential person (no state supplement)		
(d) If you are residing in a medical institution: Area I and II.			
MEDICAL INSTITUTION	Federal Benefit Level	State Supplement Benefit Level	Combined Benefit Level
Individual	\$30	\$11.62	\$41.62
(e) Mandatory income level (MIL) for grandfathered claimant. You are “grandfathered” if you qualified for assistance from the state as aged, blind, or disabled, were converted from the state to federal disability assistance under SSI in January 1974, and have remained continuously eligible for SSI since that date. If you are a MIL client, your combined federal/state SSI benefit level is the higher of the following:			
(i) The state assistance standard you received in December 1973, except if you resided in a medical institution at the time of conversion, plus the federal cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) since then; or			
(ii) The current standard.			